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CIRCULATE

1. The military airfield located at the northern perimeter of Rostov-na-Donu (47°15'N/39°53'E), Rostov Oblast, was bordered by the Selmash Plant on the east and by a railroad track on the south. The landing field, which was turf, had no runway. It was noticed during construction work that the subsoil water level was 10 meters below the surface.
2. Buildings and installations observed included: destroyed hangars; an Adcock DF station consisting of a hut fitted with a circular triple DF frame and four radio towers arranged in a square in the western section of the field; a stationary ground radio station consisting of a hut with two masts and a T-antenna in the southern field section; and an ultra short wave radio installation.
3. The field was occupied by 80 to 90 single-engine Spitfire and Hurricane fighters, which were parked without camouflage along the railroad track on the southern edge of the field. The Spitfire was a low-wing monoplane with an in-line engine, elliptical wings, landing gear retracting outward and a tail wheel.
4. Planes flew only in clear weather. They landed and took off in groups of two or five. Formation flying was practiced in three groups of four planes each. When firing at tow targets was practiced, groups of four planes

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would approach the target, then split up in elements of two before attacking individually. Only individual take-offs and landings were observed at night. Position lamps were set at night. For night firing practice the air sleeves were lighted by searchlights. Jet aircraft were never observed.

5. A sort of air force ordnance depot bordering on the Rostov Mechanical Works on the south was located south of the field and south of the highway to Novocherkassk (47°24'N/40°06'E). Aircraft engines were once observed being unloaded there. In-line and double-row radial engines for fighter aircraft were seen. The area was heavily guarded.
6. The Rostov military airfield was free from obstacles on the north, west and northeast. The landing field, which was 1 1/2 x 2 1/2 km, had a scanty grass cover and a firm subsoil. Runways or taxiways were not available. The field, which was slightly sloping from east to west, had a railroad connection.
7. Buildings and installations at the field included: A destroyed hangar; a five-story barracks building, 20x30 meters, not yet completed in 1949 but partially occupied; a former school serving as quarters; a two-story administration building also housing the weather station; an old wooden building with a device consisting of several tube frames on its side, possibly a radar set, since it was operated by air force soldiers; two new warehouses designated as sklad; and a stand for the adjusting of fighter aircraft armament. In the evening the weather station was observed determining the ceiling of clouds by means of lightbeam projectors. Small balloons used for the measuring of wind, and other balloons about 2 meters in diameter with small wooden boxes attached to them, presumably radio sondes, were also seen.
8. Only air force soldiers were seen at the field. The headquarters of the unit was quartered in the barracks building, while the flying personnel, about 50 officers ranking from junior lieutenant to captain, were quartered in small apartment houses south of the field. The ground unit of about 100 men was quartered in the former school building. The commander was a general, about 45 years of age, wearing a brown uniform with light-blue collar patches and blue general's stripes on his trousers.
9. Aircraft parked in several rows on the southern edge of the field included about 25 single-seater Spitfire fighters, about five single-seater Hurricane fighters, 10 two-seater biplanes, and six two-seater planes of a Soviet design. The latter craft had double-row radial engines with about 14 cylinders and WCA cowlings, three-bladed metal propellers with controllable pitch wing tips straight, plexiglass cabins, landing gear retracting inward. The craft had several fixed weapons and an auxiliary fuel tank fitted between the landing gear. The aircraft landed without releasing the fuel tank. The aircraft observed had their propeller hubs painted differently, red, blue and white hubs being noted.
10. Day flying was done only when the cloud ceiling was not below 200 to 250 meters and visibility was not less than 2 km. At night flying was conducted only when visibility was good and the cloud ceiling was high. The aircraft were refueled from three or four IIS tank trucks which had a capacity of 2 1/2 cubic meters. Mechanical pumps were not available. Aviation gasoline was shipped to the airfield by rail. The refueling of aircraft took about 10 minutes. It is believed that the aircraft engines were started cold in both winter and summer. At the parking site the planes would run at medium speed for four to five minutes and would then be cut off again after a short run up. In winter, when it was very cold, the engines were preheated before

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being started. During this operation the engine was covered with a tarpaulin. Two types of heaters were used, one an old German four-wheeled cart with a horizontal boiler, a small two-stroke motor and two hose couplings, and a Soviet portable one. This Soviet set functioned like a blowtorch. The jet of hot air was conducted along the aircraft engine under its tarpaulin cover. A wire net was installed forward of the flame as a precaution against fire.

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11. Initial pilot training was done with biplanes, which were used for local flights and acrobatics. Parachutists equipped with double-parachutes jumped from the biplanes while they were flying at an altitude of about 600 meters. It is believed that this parachuting was part of the pilot training. Local flights were made with the two-seater fighters, the student pilot being assisted by the flight instructor. The Spitfire and Hurricane fighters were used for solo flights by pilots retrained for the flying of fighter aircraft. Flying in formations of 2, 5, and about 27 was also observed. The planes took off in formations, distance and interval from aircraft to aircraft in the flight being about two wing spans, while the individual flights were about 10 wing spans apart. The individual squadrons lined up one behind the other at the take-off point and then took off in formation, the second squadron beginning the take-off run when the first one became airborne. The individual squadrons were composed of aircraft of all of the three types at the field. The command airplane was usually a Soviet design. Distances and intervals between the aircraft aloft were rather large. The formations landed in flights. Firing at an air sleeve towed by a Spitfire was practiced almost daily, with the tow line about 200 meters long. The attacking planes approached in elements of two from the rear. The target was attacked individually from two sides. Then the two aircraft assembled and approached again from the rear. Only individual shots or bursts of not more than three shots were fired with tracer ammunition. Low-level attacks or air-to-ground firing were not observed. Biplanes and fighters were used for night flying. Only one red obstacle light was seen. The landing had a searchlight mounted on a truck. At night the aircraft took off individually with position lights burning. Local flights were practiced individually or in elements of two. It is believed that the planes landed individually. Firing at towed air sleeves was also practiced at night, the towing plane flying without position lights. The air sleeve was lit by two searchlights, presumably with one-meter lens. Source believed that the unit stationed at the field was a fighter pilot school.
12. The airfield located just by the side of the agricultural machine factory was bordered by an engineer equipment park on the south. The field was being improved continually. an east-west runway was to be concreted. The level landing field measured 1,000x1,500 meters.
13. Three large corrugated sheet metal hangars were located in the eastern section of the field, while the DF station was in its northeastern corner.
14. More than 100 single-engine fighters, in addition to some biplanes, were stationed at the field. Training flights and individual parachuting were seen.
15. From 100 to 150 single-engine fighters were stationed at the military airfield near the Selmasch railroad station. The planes were parked in two rows along the southern edge of the field.
16. During the day 20 fighters were usually aloft at the same time. Firing at towed air sleeves was practiced at day and night. At night the attacking aircraft had position lights. The position of the air sleeves was shown by one or several searchlights.

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